764 At the village of Tik-ke-Tik in Yaelima territory, we witnessed a similar scene following the death of a young man.

At nightfall his body was wrapped in mats or rattan splints, solidly plaited, tied up, and completely sealed. At dawn the [462] mortuary bundle, attached to a strong branch, was lifted by two men. Instead of taking the village lane, they carried the corpse behind the hut and then through the bush. A few men walking Indian file made up the procession, at the end of which was the

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Fig. 12. Mother and Child, Bankutshu Tribe.

mother of the deceased in mourning costume. The path they followed was quite irregular. Largely avoiding the trodden paths, the bearers often retraced their steps and took almost two hours to reach the cemetery, four kilometers from the village.

764 On the way back, the natives explained to me that the numer-
764 ous turns and the walk through untrodden bush were meant to lead astray the evil spirit who had entered the village and killed the

1: Maes--12 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924

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to burial, the deceased is laid out in the mortuary hut. Relatives, friends, and acquaintances sit up with the body in turn. Night and day, plaintive and monotonous chants commemorate the high deeds of the deceased, his glory, his qualities, his wealth, his power, his whole life. The burial is carried out with great pomp and ends with a general consumption of the whole supply of palm wine, malafu, and masanga [Ed., sugar-cane beer].

Fig. 16. Ebandia, Chief of the Mosengere, Two Favorite Wives, and Principal Dignitaries.

The peoples of Lake Leopold II place the corpse in a wooden coffin. Those of the Lukenie region wrap it in mats. Both groups bury the deceased the day after death.

The cemeteries are located outside the village. The relatives lay out a few broken utensils on the grave. If the deceased was a hunter of repute, they plant a long staff upon the grave, and the skull of some animal killed by the dead man is attached at the top of it. [27]

During my stay in the territory of the Baboma-Banfumu of Bokala, I was struck by the presence of a tiny hut in the center of Chief Pokei's village. It was about 60 centimeters high, 30 centimeters wide, and 50 centimeters long. I thought at first

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in three large stakes to support the main crosspieces. Then he builds the vertical framework of his hut by planting strong, straight stalks all around the perimeter, 70 centimeters apart. To these vertical stalks, the native attaches horizontal crosspieces made of strong raffia stems and spaced from five to seven centimeters apart. The same method is followed for the interior partition, although weaker and thinner raffia stems are used. The space reserved for the door is left open. At this stage, the dwelling resembles a large cage, [32] fully open to the sky, with its bars

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Fig. 27. Hut of the Wadia and Mosengere.

arranged horizontally. It remains in that state all through the period of time required to prepare the materials that will line the interior walls. To this end, the native cuts leaves of the nse-nse, a very common type of palm throughout this swampy region. The leaves are assembled in groups of four, the fronds having first been folded in along the rib and roughly braided. The free ends are tied with a fine thong, and the ribs are bound together at intervals of five centimeters. Once the leaves have been prepared, the native goes inside the hut under construction and begins to cover the walls. Proceeding systematically, he works from bottom to top, attaching the nse-nse leaves to the horizontal slats and placing them so that they overlap. When the wall has been covered, it is strengthened with a few slats placed vertically and tied to the outer framework

1: Maes--74 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
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Making Fire

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372 The natives of the Kasai-Fimi-Lukenie region make fire in three different ways.

The Bateke and Banfumungu of the river use flint and steel; the Banfumungu of the interior, the Boboma, Mosongere, Tumba,

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• [516]

Fig. 59.
Making Fire by Friction.

Fig. 60.
Making Fire by Rotation.

Wadia, Basakata, Bobale, Balesa, Ipanga, Batitu, Bokala, and some of the Yaelima use the friction method [102] or longitudinal rubbing; and the Yaelima of the east, the Basongo-Meno, and the Bankutshu of the Bena-Dibele-Kole region obtain fire by gyration or rotary rubbing.

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[177] The native method tends to disappear rapidly everywhere with the introduction of matches, although most of the natives have kept their primitive strike-a-light and always carry it with them on journeys. If there are no matches or if through some circumstance -- the humidity, the crossing of a river or marsh -- the matches will not work, the native takes out his strike-a-light and makes fire by the native method.

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372 The strike-a-light of the Bateke and Banfumungu of the river consists of an iron or steel blade from three to eight centimeters long and two to three centimeters wide, a flint (a mere

From Stanley Pool to the Bumbuli region, the natives use a large earthenware vessel, generally with very little decoration on the rough, irregular outside surface which is marked with vertical lines. [134] 415 531

The few specimens we collected are the only ones that the Museum of the Belgian Congo possesses.

The vessel is oval and elongated in shape, and the bottom is rounded off so little that the pottery cannot stand upright on a horizontal surface. The opening at the top is wide. Among the Balesa and Bateke, the rim is slightly raised and tilts sharply, while among the Ipanga and Batitu, the rim is wider, and its slope is less accentuated. The latter pottery, moreover, is very often

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Fig. 70. Yaelima Women Repairing Mission.

decorated with two or three circular, impressed lines. As one advances eastward, the oval shape tends to disappear. The pot becomes spherical, the rim wider, and the impressed decoration more symmetrical and more painstakingly done.

Among the Bokala and Yaelima, the vessels used to cook the chikwangue have a bottom shaped like a spherical calotte, a rather wide, reversed rim, and a neck and body with sharp edges and distinct angles. The impressed decoration consists of two or three circular lines placed immediately above the bend

1: Maes--121 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
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27 receptacle forming the pipe's bowl, and it is covered with a glowing piece of charcoal. The native strongly draws in the smoke until he has his mouth full, holds it for a few moments, and then blows it out by opening his mouth wide and turning his head slightly to one side. He frequently inhales part of the smoke, which always provokes a violent cough, brings tears to the eyes, and sometimes entails pronounced discomfort. [161]

If the natives are together in a group, they pass the pipe from one to another after taking a good puff. Those waiting for the pipe often show signs of impatience, and anyone who ventures to smoke more than his share risks a real quarrel.

Women are never admitted to the circle of smokers, nor do they gather to smoke among themselves, but always do it in private. [Ed., the remainder of the chapter, through page 162, is not translated.]

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Fig. 89. Mongongere Smoking Tobacco.

1: Mam--136 E-5 (1913-1914) 1934 FOSS Mongo FOSS
Take F133

are worn in the hair, around the neck, on the wrists and ankles, and at the waist.

From Stanley Pool to Mukkie, the women slip a crown of cowries into the hair, sometimes wear bracelets of brass or glass beads on the wrist and forearm, and hang brass necklaces or imported beads strung on fibers around the neck. Very often the necklace goes from the shoulders under the arm. Throughout this region, imported ornaments predominate. Only the chiefs have retained a few special ornaments from the old days, notably the necklace and bracelet of worked brass and the necklace adorned with the teeth of leopards or lions. These latter objects are associated with a privilege, a prerogative, a right of use.

Fig. 101. Group of Bateke Women. Hairdos and Ornaments.

They are, in a way, badges of rank. In the full regalia worn by [190] Nenzi, a typical native petty chief, each detail seemed to have a special meaning. He had donned his finest costume in our honor and to impress us: an old tunic from the Belgian Regiment of the Guides, and a government medal around his neck on a chain, the badge of a native chief recognized by the government. He had attached a small whistle to the same chain, along with the five or six medals for his wives' taxes. Over this chain he wore the necklace of the native chiefs, made of brass and

The first one includes the Bateke-Banfumu-Baboma, among whom ornaments are relatively rare for the women as well as for the men. 381 (7)

The second one encompasses all the peoples in the region of Lake Leopold II and the lower Lukenie and is characterized by the solid brass necklace worn by the women and the ornaments trimmed with cowries and the brass plaques worn by the dignitaries and chiefs.

The third one includes the Ipanga and the Batitu, with the

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Fig. 107. A Group of Batitu Children.

belt ornamented with brass beads, rings on the fingers and toes, and solid brass rings worn above the ankles, all of which are peculiar to the women.

The fourth group is characterized by the sheath of brass rings covering the arm from wrist to elbow and worn as much by the men as by the women of the Bokala-Tselima.

The fifth group includes the Bena Dibele-Kole region, where imported ornaments have replaced the primitive ones. [186]

In addition to all these adornments used regularly in common, everyday life, the native also has ornaments reserved for show and ceremony. 301

291 speaking. (1) Is this custom in some way related to modesty? The
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1. See Chapter VI, Article VI.

[606] same question may be raised with respect to another strict rule of decorum which forbids a man to look his mother-in-law in the face. (2)

2. For details concerning this custom, see Chapter VI, Article V, 1.

It can readily be answered in the affirmative. (3)

3. Nevertheless, see Chapter X, Article II, 3.

784 The rule of decorum which forbids a man to sit down on a
576 seat where a woman is seated who is not his wife seems to me also to be dictated by sexual modesty. On the other hand, stepping over the seat under such circumstances has nothing whatever to do with this feeling. The purpose of this practice is to enable the person seated (regardless of sex) to avoid the evil repercussions of a charm or magic spell in his or her possession. (4)

4. Contrary to the explanation given by Jadot in Blancs et Noirs au Congo Belge (Whites and Blacks in the Belgian Congo), p. 90.

291 Is the native ashamed to show his nakedness? Let us beware
894 of answering this question in general terms. In order to have an idea of the situation which is sufficiently clear and precise, various cases and circumstances must be taken into account.

1) First of all it can be stated that in the normal course of daily living the Nkundó, men as well as women, do all they can to hide their genital organs. That is to say that basically they are

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

fear of death would deter him from such lawsuits. Another sign of the chosen successor is some untoward experience, such, for example, as finding cowrie shells (worn by *nkumu*) in a trap in the forest or a net that had been put out to catch fish.

Nkumu Akulu, whether the first of his line or a man succeeding in the office, bears the emblems of his rank. He wears an *ilokondo* (a branch of a special bush) stuck into his belt on the right side and hanging downwards. The special hat, *mumbi*, worn by *nkumu* is not yet his to wear, but he wears an ordinary skin hat known as *lopopo*, which is the mark of any elder. This hat may be ornamented with feathers if so desired.

When *Nkumu Akulu* decides that he has acquired sufficient wealth to enable him properly to claim the right of being made an *nkumu*, he begins his preparatory arrangements. *Mbili*, a mixture of charcoal with some sticky substance, is smeared over his body with plantain leaves. All ornamented clothing is discarded and a single cloth woven from raffia, and known as *mokele*, is worn. He refuses to sit on the benches usually used and instead sits on the bare earth. All this is explained as an attempt on the part of the man about to be raised to the office of *nkumu* to be different from others, a man apart, separate, peculiar, not partaking in the ordinary interests and affairs of his fellow men.

Nkumu Akulu now leaves his own village accompanied by all his wives and children, and also by a singer, *nyemba*, who is paid to sing his praises, and by several male Batwa (pygmies), up to half a dozen in number, known as *nsezi* because of their duty of blowing gourds and producing sounds which indicate praise of the great man. This party makes the round of villages wherever relatives are found, and the announcement is made that *Nkumu Akulu* is about to become an *nkumu*. This pilgrimage accomplished, a '*doctor*' (*nkanga*) is visited by the aspirant to office, who seeks by magic to discover whether it is the propitious time for the ceremony of installation. The whole company retires to the private enclosure at the rear of the house belonging to the *nkanga* chosen, this being the place where he performs his wonders. The *nkanga* resorts to *mingo*, that particular branch of magic which has to do with reasons for strange and unaccountable phenomena.* *Nkumu Akulu* now seeks some sign as confirmation of his determination to claim his office at this time. Some native pepper may be wrapped in a leaf or merely covered by it, and left within sight of all, and upon being opened it may be found to have turned into salt, or perhaps it may be some earth that is thus turned to salt. Or a cock may be placed upon *Nkumu Akulu's* head and covered with a basket and thus left for some time. Upon removing the basket it may be discovered that an egg has been laid. All such tests, if successful, will be regarded as indications that it really is time for *Nkumu Akulu* to assume the office of *nkumu*, but if the test fails he will usually go ahead with his plans anyhow, fearing the shame that would come to him should he go back to his home after having made the triumphant round of his relatives' homes. However, should he act thus, and he most certainly will, he knows that his days are numbered,

* If a man's fields do not produce and he cannot understand why, he will resort to *mingo*. If it is suspected, for example, that the trouble is caused by someone making "medicine", an arrow shaft is put into a small hole in the ground, and as each name mentioned, the arrow can be pulled out if the person is innocent, but remains stuck fast in the hole at the mention of the guilty name.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mango FO32
Ntumbe

a successor to replace a deceased woman, and thus maintaining the balance between the two families. Such wives were seldom killed, for they had relatives who cared for them and would object, and who had the power to do so by refusing to fulfill their obligations and by retaining the bride price already received. The group of men and women gathered together for execution thus comprised males and *kpoko* women from the "free" group (*kwia*, as applied to all men and women not Bateve), and Bateve men and women whose owners had consented to their death. It sometimes happened that a man, seeing a woman among this group who took his fancy, might obtain her by paying for her in money or substituting one of his own slaves.

In some cases the executioner, *kwanda*, was chosen from among the family of the dead *ekame*, in others he was selected from among the whole group of people over which the *ekame* held sway. The man having been chosen, the knife is brought out of the house where it has been kept by some elder. This, a blade some sixteen inches in length, two-edged, decorated by alternating longitudinal lines of polished and blackened steel and inserted in a wooden handle, is sharpened on one edge, carefully wrapped in a plantain leaf, and laid away for use on the following day.

At dawn the prisoners are taken to the water and washed to clean them, island crews accomplishing this purpose by dragging them up and down the village in the dew-drenched grass tied by a liana. The prisoners then are arranged in a V shape, the apex nearest the spot where the *ekame*'s body is sitting in state. Low seats are made by resting a stick in the forks of two perpendicular ones, and this cross bar is straddled by the victim. His hands are tied behind his back and his head tied to a sapling securely fixed at one end in the ground, the other bent down sufficiently to allow for tying the head with considerable tension on the rope. When all is thus arranged an expert drummer begins to pound out a rhythmic beat, and the ceremony of handing over the knife takes place.

The executioner of the day is dressed in finery but no camwood powder is evident, for it is a time of mourning and not of rejoicing. He wears a hat with many feathers, a vine encircles his waist, and bracelets of the same his arms. Then the man who last occupied the position of executioner comes forward. An elder has already brought the knife wrapped in its leaf and also a heap of ash on a leaf, both of which are placed on the ground. The old executioner picks up the knife while the new one faces him. The former demonstrates with gestures how he used to go about his work, the motions, the attitudes, the fine arts of the task. Even though the executioner of the day may have had previous experience, this part of the ceremony must be gone through. Then, holding the knife aloft, the instructor raises his right leg at right angles to his body, bends it at the knee so that the shin hangs perpendicularly, and the new executioner passes underneath it, returning the same way. He now faces the old executioner, who lays the knife in his own hands, arms outstretched and palms open, the handle resting in his right palm, the blade in his left. The new man, facing his instructor, places his outstretched and open palms on the shoulders of the other, draws his hands down his arms, finally coming to the knife, which, because of its position is thus received, handle in the left hand, blade in the right. Releasing his right-hand grasp of the blade, he escapes, sprinkles the blade with some of the ash, then rubs his right hand in the dirt to remove all slippery sweat. Then still

grasping the knife with his left hand, with his free right hand he drains a gourd of palm wine to gain courage, hits the nearest victim on the head with the empty gourd, then transfers the knife to his right hand. He is now ready for his work which he proceeds to do methodically, sustained by the heady wine and the rhythm of the drum. When he had finished one of the lines, a pause would be made to bring out the body for burial. Just before this is done an armed band rushes down the path, returns, goes up in the other direction, then returns; this is said by some to ward off any spirits which might be about. The *nkumu* is now brought out by the [illegible].[1] His grave, a circular hole with a crypt in one side of it, its entrance facing west, had been previously prepared. Few people in the Bongindo villages knew or had seen the actual burying place of an *nkumu*. While the corpse was carried to the grave followed by a crowd, the executioner finished his work. Those who stayed behind took the bodies of the decapitated men and women and divided them among all the participants of the funeral who would subsequently devour everything.

Accompanying the funeral procession to the grave were the *nkil*, one or more men or women who were destined to accompany the *nkumu* to his grave and to the other world beyond. At the burial of an *nkumu* witnessed in 1930 at which the semblance of some of the old rites were carried out, a party of armed men contested the right of the procession to approach the grave, there was a mock battle for a few minutes between two bands of the funeral party, and then the procession gained right of way. At the grave-side the legs and sometimes the arms of one *nkil* were broken by heavy clubs to prevent him from escaping. Then seated on the ground the body of the *nkumu* would be placed on the knees of this one, whose arms would be placed around the *nkumu* and securely fastened by driving a peg right through both wrists. Sometimes two *nkil* were thus used. If the number of victims was sufficient, others would be buried alive too, being placed in the grave in the recumbent position, with the corpse on top of them, its weight being sufficient, with the earth filling in the grave, to prevent escape. The *nkumu* was now ready for burial and was placed in the crypt, facing west.[2] The relatives of the *nkumu* approach, they pluck the leaves and stem of a juicy bush known as [illegible] and chewing it, expectorate ceremonially on the body while they address it in language somewhat as follows: 'You are going to leave us now, we are mourning, for you were a good and wise man, your discernment in matters of justice was without parallel, &c. . . . we wish that you may be happy where you go, have many wives, beget many children, lack not for meat. But don't take with you our power to beget children, leave us also some of this wisdom of yours, for what you were, we would be.' This prayer over, the [illegible] would be slipped off the head of the corpse and replaced by the informal hat, all done so dexterously that the bare head was not seen. The entrance to the

[1] The body was supposed to have remained in state for seven to nine days, but actually it was buried privately soon after death, a dummy being set up with the [illegible] on its head, and the succeeding ceremonies being conducted with only the dummy in the place of the actual body. The inland villagers however did allow the body to remain unburied for the long period, the wives being forced to keep watch in the same house. The Bongindo buried their *nkumu* generally in their houses or the spot where they had been [illegible], burying the dummy at some other spot farther off.

[2] All burials have particular regard to this west position, those buried in the recumbent position having the feet to the west. The native explanation is that this allows the spirit of the departed to follow the path of the sinking sun.